



News Release

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CAR BUYERS DRAMATICALLY IMPRESSED WITH ETHANOL LEADERSHIP

--GM's Chance for Traction on Environmental Sensitivity --

(DETROIT) January 11, 2006 -- Flex-fuel vehicles powered in part by ethanol appeal to the sensibilities of American drivers, so much so that their feeling about an automaker dramatically improves when that manufacturer shows leadership on the subject, according to a new study among vehicle owners conducted by Phoenix Automotive.

The online survey, conducted Jan. 7-9 among 2,057 vehicle owners, found that 60 percent are extremely or very familiar with the grain-based fuel. When presented with ethanol's strengths and weaknesses, over 90 percent of drivers said they would prefer a flex-fuel vehicle (running on both bio- and fossil-fuels) over a strictly gasoline or diesel version.

Fully 87 percent of vehicle owners said they would feel much or somewhat better about any manufacturer offering flex-fuel vehicles and supporting ethanol delivery infrastructure.

Ethanol is typically produced from renewable, domestically-raised grain. It is priced similar to or lower than gasoline, and it offers reductions in tailpipe particulate and toxic emissions.

General Motors could gain the most traction.

Only 13 percent of vehicle owners currently perceive General Motors as an extremely or very environmentally-sensitive company. But if GM were to establish leadership in ethanol development and flex-fuel vehicles, 76 percent would see GM as environmentally sensitive.

"With 1.6 million flex-fuel vehicles already on the market, and new lines of SUVs and trucks to be introduced in 2006, GM has a real opportunity to establish leadership in the ethanol area," said Bill Saunders, President of Phoenix Automotive, a division of Phoenix Marketing International. "Ford is not far behind, with its own aggressive ethanol programs. Ethanol could be the alternative fuel source that catapults sales of American auto manufacturers," said Saunders.

Consumers perceive renewable resource (42 percent), clean fuel (24 percent) and produced in America (19 percent) as the most important benefits of ethanol-powered vehicles.

"Last year's fuel price run-up and Middle East crises may have not only hurt American drivers' pocketbooks but also caused them to feel guilty about operating large, gas-only vehicles," said Saunders. "Ethanol power not only allows owners to enjoy large vehicles, but it can also let them feel good about the domestic agricultural economy, American energy independence and the environment.

Table: Extremely or Very Environmentally-Sensitive	
DaimlerChrysler	9 %
General Motors	13 %
Ford	18 %
Nissan	28 %
Honda	60 %
Toyota	61 %
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GM if leader in ethanol / flex-fuel development	76 %

About Phoenix Marketing International

Phoenix is one of the fastest growing top-50 marketing research firms in the U.S. and partners with many of the largest companies in the *financial services, consumer package goods, automotive and travel, leisure & entertainment industries* worldwide. In addition to industry expertise Phoenix has dedicated analytical groups leading the industry in advertising and brand analytics, multi-cultural expertise and direct marketing list optimization. Phoenix Cultural Access Group has been named the 2005 *3AF Research Partner of the Year* and has provided strategic direction and research insight to over 200 blue chip clients—helping companies effectively reach high-potential customers in these emerging high-value market segments. Combining primary and syndicated marketing research expertise with database analytics and modeling proficiency, Phoenix assists clients in improving profit dynamics of their business.

Phoenix Automotive is the Birmingham, Michigan-based division of Phoenix Marketing International. Bill Saunders, president of Phoenix Automotive, has served the automotive research community since 1978, and was the founder of Motoresearch Inc. Saunders can be reached at (248) 203-9900 or visit the web site at www.phoenixmi.com/automotive